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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

Now and Afterward.

Now, the sowing and weeping,
Working hard and waiting long;
Afterward, the golden reaping,
Harvest-home and grateful song.

Now, the pruning, sharp, unsparring,
Scattered blossoms, bleeding shoot!
Afterward, the plenteous bearing,
Of the Master's pleasant fruit.

Now, the tuning and the tension,
Waiting minors, discord strong;
Afterward, the grand ascension,
Of the Alleluia song.

Now, the spirit conflict-riven,
Wounded heart, unequal strife;
Afterward, the triumph given,
And the victor's crown of life.

Now, the training, strange and lowly,
Unexplained and tedious now;
Afterward, the service holy,
And the Master's "Enter thou!"

F. R. HAVERGAL.

Religious.

Missionary Conference in Calcutta.

The Missionaries and native Preachers in India are accustomed to hold Conferences in convenient centres from time to time. One of these was held in October last in Calcutta of all Protestant denominations. The London Baptist "Missionary Herald," (Feb.) gives us some reports of the proceedings. It consisted principally of native ministers. From 200 to 250 were present the first day in the Baptist Chapel:—

"Two papers were read and followed by discussion, on 'The Condition of the Native Church.' The second day they met at the Free Church, in Cornwallis Square. Two papers were read and followed by discussion, on 'The Duties and Responsibilities of the Native Church.' There were present about 300. All who spoke, and they were many, expressed a wish to become independent of the help of any missionary society. We were exceedingly glad to hear them speak so. There is a good deal of enthusiasm among the native Christians just now. We hope that it will continue and increase, and tend to develop the independence of the churches. On the third day they met at the Independent Church at Bhowanipore. Papers were read and followed by discussion, on the 'Wants of the Native Church;' about 300 were present. This church raises about Rs. 125 monthly for different objects, and out of that amount the members pay the salary of their pastor. At this meeting a very worthy native brother spoke with great enthusiasm. His name is Rev. M. N. Bose, and he is a member of the Free Church. This good brother left a very good post in Calcutta some time ago, in order to go out into the swampy district in the south of Furreedpore to preach the Gospel to the poor peasants living there. He is supported by a native Christian merchant who lives in Calcutta. On the fourth day, which was Sunday, sermons were preached in all the native churches on the necessity of more brotherly love and union between the brethren of the different branches of the Church of Christ. On the following Monday they met again at Intally. The attendance was very good. The subject under consideration was 'The Best Means of promoting a better understanding between European Missionaries and Native Christians.' The discussion was very warm. It was thought by most speakers that a great gulf exists between the missionaries and native converts. It was admitted that the habits of both are very different; yet they believed that they ought to, and might, come nearer to each other. The next day they met in the school-room of the Church Mission in Amherst Street. The chair was taken by the well-known scholar, Dr. K. M. Banerjee. Papers were read and discussion followed as during the previous days. The subject

was, 'Present Missionary Operations.' Great stress was laid on the necessity that every member of the Christian Church should become a missionary to his fellow-countrymen. There was a great deal of life in all these meetings.

Many singers were invited from the Mofussil (country) by the Calcutta brethren. Rev. G. C. Dutt, with his singing band from Kholmia attended; and over fifty singers came from the Baptist Churches in the south of Calcutta. It was felt on all hands that singing is destined to supply an important factor in the evangelization of India. After the Conference was over the singing bands, together with a large number of other native Christians, paraded some of the streets of Calcutta, singing hymns. Some of the Hindoos were very much enraged, and they tried their utmost to drown the singing by shouting the name of Hurri (Vishu). But they soon saw that they could not put down the obnoxious singing. I suppose there never was such a remarkable turn-out of native Christians in Calcutta before. What a change since the time of Carey, Marshman, and Ward! and what an encouragement to us!

Cloth-making among the Karens.

Among the hill tribes of Toungoo, they make a bow of a piece of flexible bamboo with a string; and our American boys would think they intended to make a bow and arrow, but they do not get as far as the arrow. With the left hand, they take hold of this bow, resting the other end on the mat among the cotton. They snap the string rapidly with the right hand. The cotton goes in a fluffy pile in one direction, and the seeds in another. Among the Burmans and those Karens who live near the large towns, a cotton-gin is used. It looks, at first glance, like a rude clothes-wringer, made of two round sticks held in a frame, with a rough handle, and a hole at the end for a finger, with which they turn the machine. It squeaks and groans, and makes music not delightful to the civilized ears. But it does the work very well.

Then the cotton is to be spun. Almost every tribe has its own way of spinning, and each considers its own way best. Some use a single stick, like a knitting-needle, run through a round bit of wood or a bean that looks like a big horse-chesnut. This they twirl in a singular manner, as they walk about their ordinary work or travel up and down hill, and they make a very even thread with it. Others use a rude wheel. After the spinning and washing of the thread, they, if away from the towns, must go into the jungle, and hunt up certain barks, roots and leaves to make the different dyes they want. The women of Toungoo make a black dye for cotton, that is jet black, and stands hard wear without turning gray. But it is becoming almost a lost art among them, and will disappear with the old women. It is now getting to be more the fashion and much easier to buy colored thread from the Burmans, Shans, and Chinese. The native colors we call dull and faded; but they combine them very nicely, giving fine effects. Upon being asked why they always separate opposing colors by a line of white or black, "Oh, it looks better," will be the answer. But that is always done, except, perhaps, by some awkward beginner. Harmony of color meets one constantly till a Christian congregation looks like a pleasant flower garden.

The women are very particular in their weaving: every color must be in its place, and every thread in its own position; and although we think we find irregularities, yet they are intentional. After dyeing and preparing her thread, a young lady's hands are so stained that only time can remove the almost indelible dye. Like some young ladies in enlightened lands, they are fond of putting such disagreeable work on the patient mother or grand-mother and thus save their own hands.

Among the hill tribes, the weaving apparatus is very simple. Three or four bamboos, about three feet long and of different sizes; a few thin sticks; a large bit of iron-wood that looks like a scythe-blade; a few small sticks,—and that is the loom. The knife-blade piece is much prized, as it must be evenly balanced and smooth, and is handed down from mother to daughter. It is almost impossible to buy a good one. The warp for the garment is wound round over several bamboos, and is the most difficult part of all, requiring hours of walking back and forth, and sometimes days. When this is satisfactory, sundry threads and sticks keep it in place; and it is rolled up tightly, to be filled at leisure. The bundle is often rolled up and placed overhead in the roof. To weave, it is taken down, and one end is tied to the side of the house or veranda; and our lady sits down on the floor, and tying the other end round her waist, and sitting back straight, she pulls the web straight and is ready to weave. The shuttles are bits of sticks as large as a half lead-pencil, with the thread wound on very roughly. With the help of sundry little threads, she divides her web, and throws a shuttle through, and lays it on the floor on the other side; then taking her heavy knife-beam, she inserts that, and pushes the thread up close. Every thread in the garment is laid in this laborious way. Fortunate for the poor women that the climate requires so little clothing.—*Helping Hand.*

China.

FROM MISS NORWOOD.

SWATOW, CHINA, Oct. 3, 1879.

After remarking upon the pleasure of which the little missionary company had experienced in the two weeks' visit of Mr. and Mrs. Bainbridge, of Providence, Miss Norwood says: "This communion week was one of special interest to me. There were twenty-one baptisms. Three of my school girls were among those baptised. Two of them are daughters of two of Miss Field's Bible-women; and one, the daughter of a preacher. The elder daughter of the 'Nun' was also a candidate; but it was thought best, much to her disappointment, to defer her case for a few months. As I look back over the year that I have had the school, I am filled with thanksgiving for the many answers to prayer that have been granted to me. I cannot doubt that God's hand has been leading me in this my first undertaking in this heathen land. This month, I have entered upon another branch of work, that to which I have looked forward ever since my arrival. Last week three of the Bible-women were formally banded over to me, Sui Lang, A Pio, and Sister Long, the latter being detained from entering upon this work now.—*ib.*

Burmah.

Mr. Roberts sends a short letter from Bhamo, to let us know that he still has communication with the outside world. The king has changed his tactics little, and desires the English to continue to run their steamer upon the river. Still no confidence is placed in him, and the brethren below urge the sending of the ladies to Lower Burmah. The ladies, however are very brave, and have no intention of leaving their husbands. A Karen has come up from Bassein, who will perhaps stay as helper, and two more men with their wives are expected as soon as affairs are once settled. "Remember us in your prayers," says Mr. Roberts, "for we need the help which can only come in answer to earnest prayer."

Nearly three hundred newspapers are published in Japan, many of them enterprising dailies. It is said that every enterprising man takes a paper.

One never realizes just how much a pair of skates can benefit a tailor until one puts them on for the first time.

The Fire-Baptism.

BY REV. G. C. LORIMER, D. D.

The fire-baptism effects one other work; it emkindles, inflames. Burning zeal, intense enthusiasm follow its reception. I do not say that this holy intensity may not be repressed, that the fire may not be smothered, and the heat be perceptibly reduced. We know to the contrary. There are professors of religion who constantly deprecate zeal, as did Talleyrand; they are afraid of fervor in religion, and wherever it appears do their best to allay its warmth. They always have some cold, wet-blanket of criticism handy, and some Babcock extinguisher of an objection convenient. They resemble lordly icebergs, clean-cut, sharp, well-defined, standing out rigidly from the world, and equally as stiff and frozen. Their presence chills, sets an entire congregation in a shiver, and charges the spiritual atmosphere through and through with frost-particles. They represent the glacial period of Christian life, the north pole of piety; and it is more difficult to find the way to heaven through their frigid character than it has proven to pierce the Arctic circle. As refrigerators they are an eminent success; for they cool, congeal, benumb, freeze, and quench the first flush and spark of religious concernment in those around them. Such a condition is not normal; it is unnatural and execrable. Better the previous heat, the sultry torrefactions, and the scorching inflammability of fanaticism in a godly cause, than this gelid, biting, bleak, and lawless iciness. The world can understand and appreciate the former, but not the latter. Those who are earnest in all the ordinary affairs of life, who are familiar with the excitement that convulses thousands every day, who witness the intense fervor of those who crowd the stock exchange cannot see why the most important interest on the earth, the well-being of immortal souls, should be dealt with so coolly, so languidly, and indifferently. They cannot but doubt the reality of religion, when the people who profess it are so apathetic and frost-bitten.

Believe me, my brethren, we shall never do much good until we are in down-right earnest. Your Elijahs, your Pauls, your Luthers, your Whitefields would have been as ordinary men but for the consuming zeal emkindled by the fire-baptism, that impelled them onward, in spite of obstacles, in their heaven-given work. The word "enthusiasm" has in it the Greek term "theos," God, and really means to be divinely inspired, and every man who has wrought mightily and successfully has felt this fiery stirring. To undervalue its importance, to resist its influence, to reproach its operations, is practically and actually to repudiate that baptism which John announced as the very climax of Christ's renewing grace. If you would serve Him successfully, you must do something to fan your smoldering zeal into a blaze. Of Archimedes it is related that he used a mirror to concentrate the sun rays, and by this means fired the ships of Syracuse. Set the mirror of heaven before you, study what a Christian man should be as reflected in the New Testament, and you shall find it rekindling earnestness and intensifying devotion. It is said that "Athens never became truly great until the twelve tribes of Attica brought each its brand to the altar of Athene Pallas;" and so the church, as a body, will never command the homage of the world until every member brings a heart of fire to be concentrated to her service. And I know of no surer way, if any heart has grown cold, to revive its fervency than by bringing it in contact with others all aglow with burning energy. Let the indifferent among us do this; let them mingle in the prayer-meetings, let them converse together by the way, and soon the coldest will be warmed, and the sacred fires blaze within the soul once more, as brightly and as intensely as of old.

In bringing this study to a close, a

few words of appeal may not be out of place. Much has been said and much has been written about the sacredness of the domestic hearth, but few persons have considered the origin of the idea and its significance. The first homes were looked upon as holy, because the fire was there cherished. Fire was the household god; as the younger Edda has it, "The sun," whom the people worshipped "in the house." It was never permitted to expire; and if by any chance it went out, disasters innumerable were anticipated and predicted. The thought underlying these superstitions is most true, beautiful, and spiritual. It reminds us that fervent piety is the source of domestic fidelity, and the shield against manifold evils. When it prevails, husbands and wives are united in closest bonds of sympathy, and children feel an influence that refines and elevates. A religious home is the sweetest spot on earth. There cannot be anything more beautiful beneath the sky than the family group around the altar, the father breathing his priestly prayer, and the little ones whispering the tender "amen." And there can not be a more precious inheritance for children than the memory of saintly parents, journeying together toward the heavenly mansions, and encouraging their boys and girls to keep them company. In coming years many things shall be forgotten, but the form of parents devoutly supplicating heaven to be gracious to their children shall never fade or be forgotten. Fathers and mothers, have you the sacred fire in your hearts? Is yours a Christian home? If not, then seek to-day that blessed baptism, where glowing floods shall fill your homes with a new lustre and with a sacred halo.

In ancient Persia they did not bury their dead as we do. The people elevated the bodies of departed friends above earth, and left them in the light. It was their belief that the sun, reverenced by the living, would receive the dead to its embrace. Pathetic aspirations! Sublime hope! blessed glimmering of glory! They wholively in light, shall die in the light, and shall be translated by the light to that radiant world, where the shadows of darkness shall never fall. This is the Christian's confidence; and it is because of this, that speaking through my lips, you are urged to-day by all the saints in earth and heaven, to seek the fire-baptism, that, being purified in its cleansing floods, you may attain that heavenly perfection, divinely likened to "a sea of glass mingled with fire."

Sabbath Worship.

The good old practice of going to church by families, and doing it as a matter of course and of conscience, so that nothing but a real and serious barrier could stop it, has given place to an easy, yes or no way of treating the matter, such as takes little account of conscience or God. And even men and women whose names are on the church rolls are often seen to be almost without conscience in this matter.

No one can afford to lose the benefits of Sabbath worship to his own soul, but this is not all the loss of personal neglect in this matter. The peace and welfare of society are at stake. A general neglect of public worship is sure to bring vice and crime, in the place of order and thrift. The proof is seen in many places. The person who, in view of the facts which are so abundant, neglects public worship, becomes responsible to the full extent of personal influence for the loss and injury to public virtue, which comes of others' neglect. No person, but especially no professing Christian, can stay away from the house of God, without a bad effect upon all who see it. In this matter a poor excuse is not better than none. It is often even worse. Not a few Christians in name are doing incalculable mischief in just this way. It is a scandal to religion in many places that nominal Christians are worse even than men of the world in the neglect of public worship.—*Christian Secretary.*